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Washington Roundup

Verification Issue

Verification of SALT 2—or the lack of it—now emerging in the Senate as the pivotal issue in the ratification debate (AW&ST Apr. 16, pp. 13, 14), is heating up through leaks and counterleaks to the press, beginning with the Carter Administration. Sen. Jake Garn (R.-Utah) charged the Administration with leaking plans to replace seven listening posts in Iran with Lockheed U-2 flights (AW&ST Apr. 9, p. 13).

That brought a counterleak from SALT opponents that Central Intelligence Agency Director Stansfield Turner told the Senate Intelligence Committee it will take until 1983-84 to replace intelligence gathering activities in Iran, not all of which are related to data needed to detect the development of missiles banned under SALT 2: Defense Secretary Harold Brown later said the portion of activities related to SALT verification can be replaced in one year, but later reduced that to "the moment it [the treaty] is signed."

While SALT news poured from shakers all over Washington, President Carter told Sens. Mark O. Hatfield (R.-Ore.), George McGovern (D.-S.D.) and William Proxmire (D.-Wis.), that the treaty is not all he would like, but added it is needed to "inject badly needed momentum into the arms control process."

"I, too, would have preferred to see even more restrictive limitations in this agreement, but that did not prove feasible," Carter wrote. "However, we will never achieve those more restrictive limitations if we abandon this agreement simply because it did not do enough." Carter said attaining SALT will start a snowballing effect ending in "completion of a comprehensive test ban treaty, progress in the negotiations on force reductions in Europe and creation of new arms control undertakings in areas such as long-range theater nuclear systems."

SALT Gains

One of the accomplishments of SALT 2 listed by Carter is the limitation on new types of intercontinental ballistic missiles, which lies at the heart of the verification battle. Administration officials had hoped to replace the line-of-sight listening posts in Iran with U-2s based in Pakistan. But military sales credits and grant aid, plus all but humanitarian economic aid, have been halted to Pakistan after it was discovered the country was funneling nuclear assistance given by the U. S. for peaceful purposes into a nuclear weapons development program. The resulting strain on U.S.-Pakistan relations now complicates the issue of where to base the U-2s.

Meanwhile, back at the Senate, Sen. Barry Goldwater (R.-Ariz.) released a report by the General Accounting Office on the expenditures made by the Carter Administration to sell SALT: to date, \$600,538 has been spent mostly by the State Dept.'s SALT working group in the Bureau of European Affairs and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Part of the funds were spent to sponsor conferences for opinion leaders in Wisconsin, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Florida, Arizona and Delaware, in hopes that the federal funds will create a proliferation of SALT supporters.